

SM- 321

1930's

Branson House  
Abell  
Private

This one story house with hipped roof was built in a bungalow style by local hired carpenters and is one of many that were built in this design during the 1930's and 40's for small landowning Negro and white families. Specifically it was built as the residence for Margaret Collins Branson, the daughter of Robert H. Collins, and marks one stage in the transition of housing that for this family is known to have begun with a log cabin in the last quarter of the 19th century.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SM-321

MAGI #1903215804

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

The Branson House

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER Abell Rd., west side.

CITY, TOWN

Abell

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Md.

COUNTY

St. Mary's

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☐ DISTRICT  
☐ BUILDING(S)  
☒ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☐ AGRICULTURE ☐ MUSEUM  
☐ COMMERCIAL ☐ PARK  
☐ EDUCATIONAL ☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT ☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ GOVERNMENT ☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ INDUSTRIAL ☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ MILITARY ☐ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Margaret Branson

Telephone #: 301-769-2487

STREET & NUMBER

Abell Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Abell

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Md.

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. St. Mary's County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Map 47; P. 168  
Liber #: JMM 6  
Folio #: 310

CITY, TOWN

Leonardtown

STATE

Rd.

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

This house is one of many that line Abell Rd. and other nearby streets, forming the present-day center of the black community of Abell.

This house is built in a bungalow style, one story in height, with hipped roof and shed dormer windows. The principal block is square in shape, with four rooms downstairs, symmetrically located on either side of the central passageway. Into each of the two front rooms are let double windows with double hung sashes, allowing a lot of vantilation from winds off the water and illumination from sunlight as well. Along the entire south length a shed room has been added, probably to increase the number of bedrooms. Between the walls of the back to back rooms on either side of the central passageway ascends a brick stove flue, with openings to serve each room. The house has been freshly painted, the roof covered with red tar paper in a shingle design, and the house is well-maintained.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
	<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

Black History

SPECIFIC DATES	c. 1930's	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Hired local carpenters
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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

According to Mrs. Branson, this house was built in the 1930's by local carpenters hired by her husband. The design that they used is a common one in this community for houses of this period. This house then represents the form that was popular among small black landowners of that era, who were able to pay for hired carpenters, and it thereby constitutes one stage in the transition of housing. Specifically this house should be seen in line with the houses of Margaret Branson's family; the log house of her grandparents in which her father Robert H. Collins was born; the larger two frame house that he built in 1898 and in which Mrs. Branson was raised; and this one, together with that of her brother, Dickerson Collins, and of her other brother Edward; all of which have been surveyed as part of this project.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

George W. McDaniel, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Md. Commission on Afro-American History and Culture

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

20 Dean St.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis,

STATE

Md.

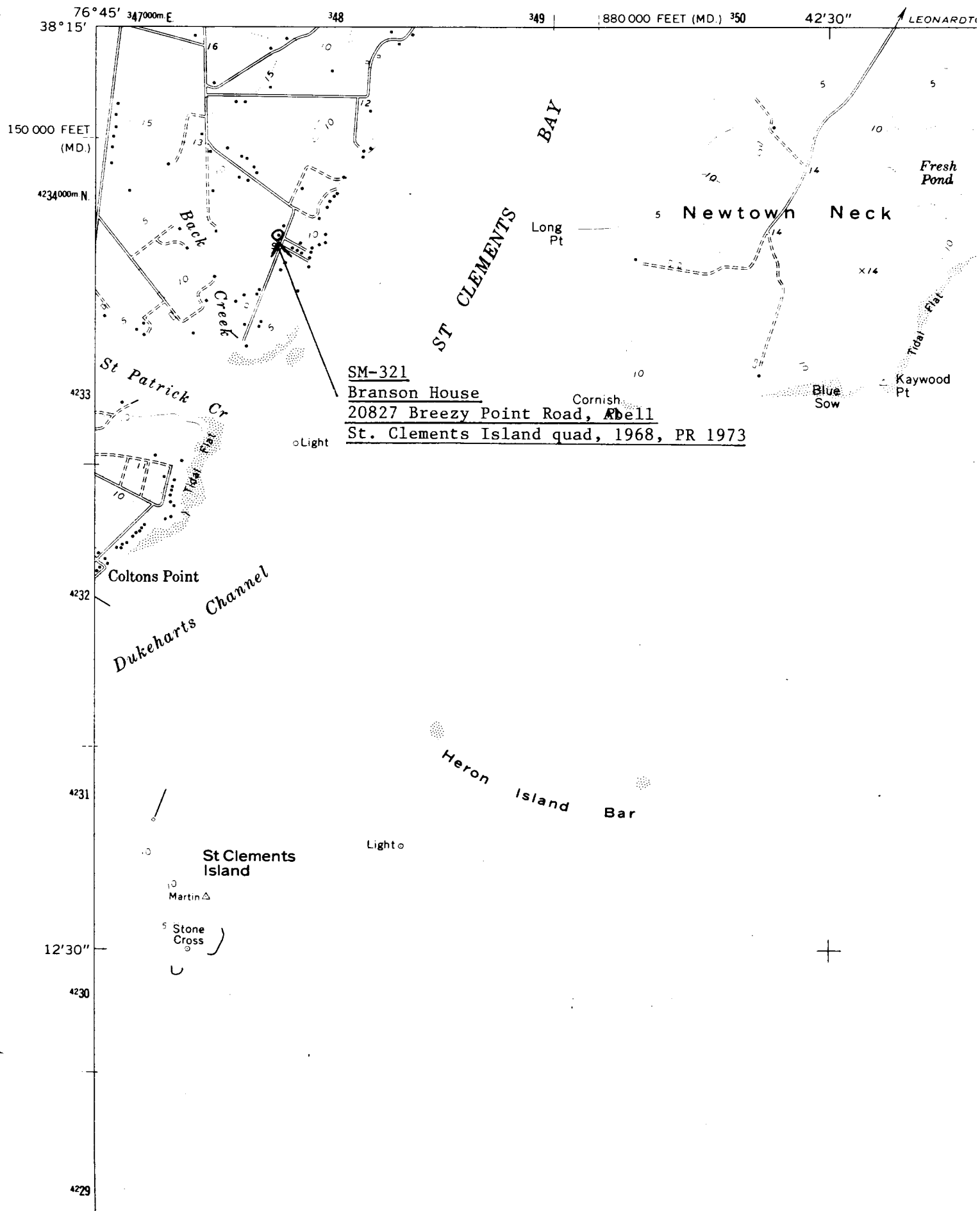
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

5660 IV SE  
(ROCK POINT)





Branson House

STMA 321

Abell, Md.

NORTH facade

GWM - 2/77





BRANSON HOUSE

STMA 321

ABELL, Md.

EAST facade

GWM — 2/77